

SENATORIAL GOSSIP CAN AID THE COMMUNISTS

KKNOWN for his bluntness and devastating candor, Sen. Stephen M. Young (D-O.) does not always give the impression of a man who thinks carefully before he speaks. Consider his astonishing statement about the Central Intelligence Agency. It sounded like gossip to us. Young claims that a member of the CIA told him that the secret organization had committed atrocities in Vietnam to discredit the Viet Cong. According to this allegation, the CIA disguised some people as Viet Cong and they committed atrocities.

These are serious charges to be made against an arm of the United States government by a United States senator. Yet Senator Young has passed on offhandedly what at this point can be considered no more than a dark rumor. He did say that, as a member of the Senate armed service committee, he would ask that group to investigate CIA activities. Senator Young could have made his request to the committee without sounding off in public. A spokesman for the CIA, incidentally, has termed the Young statement "absolutely false."

It is extremely rare for the CIA to dignify with a public denial any of the frequent accusations against it. But these charges are usually voiced by such critics of the United States as Fidel Castro and the masters of Communist China. We would have expected a sense of responsibility from a member of the U. S. Senate. Instead, we got gossip which no doubt will supply the propagandists of Hanoi, Peking and Moscow with a choice topic for weeks.